

# Children's Administration 2014 Cultural Competency Plan

*A plan to help all children involved with the public child welfare system to experience improved safety, permanency and well-being outcomes and to achieve their developmental milestones-big and small.*



***"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."***

~Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr., Civil Rights Activist

## Background

Children's Administration has maintained a strong commitment to cultural competence that has evolved over time.

The Administration has services and structures in place to address service recipients who are medically fragile, have physical, emotional, or intellectual disabilities, have limited English proficiency, need interpretation or translation services, or need access to materials in alternative formats such as closed captioning for the hearing impaired.

In 2007, the Washington State legislature passed Substitute House Bill 1472 which required the state to convene an Advisory Committee charged with addressing the overrepresentation of children and families of color involved with the public child welfare system and improving outcomes for those children and families.

That committee, the Washington State racial Disproportionality Committee worked with Children's Administration to develop a remediation plan to address racial disproportionality and outcome disparity for children and families of color.

In addition, the state legislature passed, Senate Bill 5656 during the 2011 legislative session, enacting a state Indian Child Welfare law. This law was designed to demonstrate the state's commitment to protecting the essential tribal relations and best interests of Indian children by promoting practices designed to prevent voluntary or involuntary out-of-home placement and reinforcing the spirit and intent of the federal Indian child Welfare Act.

In 2014, a CA staff member has been identified to serve as an advocate to address the issues and concerns the GLBTQ population faces today in child welfare. CA's practice will be reviewed through the lens of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender staff and those we serve.

In the beginning of 2014, Jennifer Strus, CA Assistant Secretary sent a message to all staff regarding the progress being made by the department in reducing racial disproportionality. While CA has worked closely and successfully with WSRDAC, the department wants to take our work to another level. As CA continues to move forward with disproportionality practice will improve with the use of data, tools, leadership support, and strategic planning for successful measurable outcomes.

Today, we continue to explore ways to further visibility, inclusion, and equity for those we serve and to identify support strategies for those who experience intersections in cultural groups, recognizing that individuals with characteristics of two or more marginalized cultures may experience even greater challenges in achieving positive outcomes.

## Goal 1: Review Cultural Competency Practices

**Objective:** To provide training to ensure a culturally competent workforce. Also, to adopt and implement a means to examine new and current protocols, policies, and practice, to identify and prevent any racial inequities to those served.

### Action Steps:

- **Anti-racism training has been provided to CA staff:**
  1. **Knowing Who You Are – Casey Family Programs**

Knowing Who You Are is a three-part curriculum for social workers and other child welfare professionals. Created with the direct collaboration of alumni of foster care, youth still in care, birth parents, and resource families, the curriculum helps child welfare professionals explore race and ethnicity, preparing them to support the healthy development of their constituent’s racial and ethnic identity.
  2. **Undoing Racism – People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond**

The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond focuses on understanding what racism is, where it comes from, how it functions, why it persists and how it can be undone. Workshops utilize a systemic approach that emphasizes learning from history, developing leadership, and maintaining accountability to communities, creating networks, undoing internalized racial oppression and understanding the role of organizational gate keeping as a mechanism for perpetuating racism.
  3. **Prejudice Reduction Workshop Training – National Coalition Building Institute**

Prejudice Reduction Workshop Training shows how participants have been taught to think and act as members of their racial, gender, and other identity groups and provides skills for bridging differences. NCBI has partnered with CA to provide relevant disproportionality data drawn from the WA State children welfare system. Building Bridges also trains participants on how to lead the difficult conversations necessary to understand cultural differences and overcome racism in their respective areas of influence.
- **Racial Equity Analysis (REA)Tool – Subcommittee of the WA State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee and King County Coalition on Racial Disproportionality**

In 2013, this subcommittee developed a REA Tool which Children’s Administration adopted in 2014. Presently, CA is in the process of coordinating training and an implementation plan for use of the tool.

- **Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee (WSRDAC) - Four Supplemental Initiatives adopted by Children's Administration**
  1. Increase recruitment and retention of foster families of color.
  2. Increase documentation of racial, ethnic, and tribal affiliation data in FamLink.
  3. Decrease the plan of Long Term Foster Care for children of color.
  4. Ongoing mandatory disproportionality awareness training for all CA staff.
- **Statewide Disproportionality Strategic Draft Plan**

A Statewide Disproportionality Strategic Plan has been drafted to establish continuity across the state to strategically in eliminate racial disproportionality in Washington's child welfare system. The plan will be presented to CA's Leadership Team for approval and implementation.

### **Indicators of Progress:**

- Disproportionality for children of color will decrease and ultimately be eliminated.
- Children and youth of color will have improved outcomes.
- CA staff will have increased knowledge of the importance of racial equity resulting in improved practice.

### **Target:**

- The above trainings and initiatives continue to be ongoing.
- The implementation date of the REA Tool is fall of 2014.
- The target date for the Statewide Disproportionality Strategic Plan is fall of 2014.

**Objective:** Increase advocacy for and training related to the needs of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning children, youth and families.

### **Action Steps:**

- **Designated staff person has been appointed to create a GLBTQ workgroup to target adolescent issues.**
- **GLBTQ training has been added to the Adolescent Training Track Week for social workers whose primary cases load are teenagers.**

- In the fall 2014, Stonewall Youth Agency will be presenting at CA's Program and Policy All Staff meeting regarding GLBTQ related issues.
- A GLBTQ section has been added to the Foster Youth website [www.independence.wa.gov](http://www.independence.wa.gov).
- CA has provided webinars addressing GLBTQ to the Set Up contracted providers for educating their staff.
- Children's Foster Youth and Alumni Advisory Board, have a GLBTQ youth who has presented at Caregiver Core Trainings for foster and relative caregivers.
- CA's contracted provider for Recruitment & Retention of Foster Parents, Olive Crest, are conducting targeted recruitment for GLBTQ foster homes.

#### **Indicators of Progress:**

- Improved outcomes for GLBTQ children and youth in care.
- Foster and relative caregivers will receive training in meeting the needs of GLBTQ children and youth.
- Staff will receive training in meeting the needs of GLBTQ children and youth.

#### **Target:**

- The majority of items are ongoing.
- The appointment of a designated staff to work with the GLBTQ population is targeted for fall of 2014.

**Objective:** Children's Administration collaborates with Tribal Partner's, Recognized American Indian Organizations, and Indian Policy Advisory Committee (IPAC), in promoting the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICW) to guarantee informed social work practice for all Native American children. Also, CA values the government to government relationship with the federally recognized tribes in Washington State.

#### **Action Steps:**

- **CA provides ongoing training on the State & Federal Indian Child Welfare Act.**  
This is a mandatory training for all CA staff to complete.

- **CA continues to provide cultural training on Indian traditions and practices for Native American children in foster care and the foster families who care for the children.**  
Throughout the state CA staff and tribes collaborate to provide trainings called “cultural days,” for NA children, foster children, and families who care for NA children an opportunity to enhance their knowledge regarding NA traditions and cultural practices.
- **The University of Washington, Alliance for Excellence, Training Department, is developing Competencies and Curriculum that keep an ICW focus in all the competencies and curriculum development for the Regional Core Training for Social Workers.**  
IPAC representatives serve on the statewide Competence & Curriculum Committee to provide feedback on the curriculum.
- **CA staff continues to work with all the Federally Recognized Tribes to update all Tribal Memorandums of Understanding (MOU’s) and this work is ongoing.**  
To date, many tribes have updated MOU’s, and for others the work continues until the MOU is completed.
- **A statewide ICW Case Review was conducted in 2012. CA will monitor the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan to address the concerns from the Case Review.**  
The initial primary focus will be on tribal inquiries and the completion of the ancestry chart.

### Indicators of Progress:

- Service delivery for NA children and families will be culturally appropriate.
- The disproportionate rate of NA children in care for 2 years or more will decrease.
- NA children will initially be placed with relatives rather than out of home care.

### Target:

- Ongoing



## Goal 2: Build Community Partnerships

**Objective:** Actively engage, and collaborate with partner agencies and private agency providers to leverage the best expertise and resources to meet the needs of culturally diverse children, youth, and families.

### Action Steps:

- The Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee meets regularly bringing together experts from multiple professional domains to offer counsel on strategies for reducing racial disproportionality.
- The CA Disproportionality Team met with the Commission on African American Affairs to share with them the work being done regarding disproportionality in CA. The Disproportionality Team plans to meet with the other Commissions as well.
- CA has a Disproportionality website with information on the work being done.
- CA is working with the DSHS Office of Diversity and Inclusion to learn and share knowledge in building a culturally competent workforce.
- Children's Administration-Indian Policy Advisory Committee meets once a month to ensure that our tribal partners are updated on the services that CA provides to Native American families and children.
- There is an internet and intranet website through CA with ICW information.
- 7.01 planning meetings are held to outline the annual improvements for each regional office in working with tribes.
- LICWAC meetings are held to staff ICW cases in each office to ensure that cases are meeting ICWA requirements and tribal requirements.
- ICW/LICWAC Retreat is being planned for the fall of 2014, to provide training and establish consistency statewide for these staffing's.
- CA is working with other state agencies and community-based service providers to leverage resources and expertise toward training and advocacy regarding gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender issues.
- CA Limited English Proficient services in conjunction with King County Courts are exploring various ways to obtain court interpreters when needed.
- The CA LEP website is up and running; updating the website as needed.

### Indicators of Progress:

- Community partners, tribal partners and state staff will work cooperatively together.
- Resource sharing will reduce fiscal and human resource impact to state agencies and private agencies.



### **Target:**

- Ongoing

## **Goal 3: Accountability Measurement**

**Objective:** To continually assess our commitment to, strategies to further, and outcomes of cultural competency efforts throughout the Administration.

### **Action Steps:**

- WSRDAC and CA has implemented majority of the initial remediation efforts identified in the 2008 Racial Disproportionality Remediation Plan. The status regarding the remediation initiatives and supplemental initiatives are reported to the legislators annually in the Racial Disproportionality Report to the Legislators.
- CA and the Office of Indian Policy (OIP) updated the ICW Case Review Tool to be used in the ICW Case Review.
- In every region, CA and the tribes meet regularly in a 7.01 meeting to report on progress being made with the 7.01 Plan.
- CA staff meets with all federally recognized tribes to update all tribal Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's).
- CA to obtain some baseline data on GLBTQ youth in care.
- The LEP policy has been updated this year.
- Conduct CA Employee Survey's consistently.
- The Continuous Quality Improvement and Quality Assurance Committee meet every other month to review policies, practice, and service delivery, to provide consultation, and strategize how to implement improvements when needed.

### **Division or Administration Responsible:**

Children's Administration Continuous Quality Improvement and Quality Assurance Programs provide measureable outcomes and hold programs accountable for the quality services offered to consumers. Also at Children's Administration the Federal Children & Family Case Review Unit, ICW Office, Tribal/RAIO representatives, WSRDAC, and other community stakeholders keep CA accountable for competent services, and improvement of services when identified.



### **Indicators of Progress:**

- CA's documentation of race, ethnicity, and tribal affiliation will improve in FamLink resulting in improved racial disproportionality data.
- Children, youth, and families will have the opportunity to self-report demographic data related to sexual orientation or gender identity if given the option.
- Improvement in providing culturally competent practice and services resulting in racial equity to all consumers.

### **Target:**

- Annual Legislative Report is due in the fall of every year.
- Other action steps ongoing.
- GLBTQ data collection is in the exploratory stages.

## **Goal 4: DSHS Support Cultural Competence**

**Objective:** Interagency collaboration to improve culturally competent talent management and service delivery that is individualized to the needs of the service population but which shares integrated values, objectives, and resources.

### **Action Steps:**

- Children's Administration is represented on the DSHS Cultural Competency Committee.
- An IPAC and CA Subcommittee are in the process of updating the ICW Manual.
- Children's Administration to be represented on the DSHS GLBT workgroup.
- Coordinate and collaborate with DSHS to provide comprehensive training to Children's Administration staff.

### **Division or Administration Responsible:**

Department of Social and Health Services, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Children's Administration Continuous Quality Improvement and Quality Assurance Program, and DSHS Communications Office.

### **Indicators of Progress:**

- Staff and service recipients report increased respect and culturally appropriate service delivery throughout the state.

## **Target:**

- Ongoing

## **Goal 5: Support Language Access**

**Objective:** To ensure that all service recipients have equal access to print and electronic publications in their native most fluently spoken languages and to facilitate interpretation services for those we serve.

**Activities:** The Department provides Limited English Proficient (LEP) services to consumers, who are limited in their ability to read, write and/or speak English. LEP services are provided in the service recipient's primary language by authorized bilingual workers or by contracted interpreters and translators. A primary language is the language a consumer has indicated on their application or eligibility review as the language they wish to communicate in with the department.

## **Division or Administration Responsible:**

Children's Administration Continuous Quality Improvement & Quality Assurance Program, and DSHS Communications Office

## **Action Steps:**

- Continue to provide services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients according to DSHS Administrative Policy 7.21.
- The Alliance is exploring the best way to incorporate LEP training into their new Regional Core Training curriculum, possibly an online training.
- CA LEP website is up and running and we are continually updating it as we receive feedback
- CA LEP policy has been updated
- Primary interpreter contractor (CTS) has a renewed focus on filling DSHS interpreter requests (i.e., trying to lower our unfilled interpreter request rate)
- In conjunction with King County Courts we are exploring different ways to obtain court interpreters when needed
- DES will be issuing a new RFP for statewide interpreter services which should help increase our interpreter resources
- FAR documents have been translated into 21 languages
- GLBT Children, Youth and Families Consultant will work with the Limited English Proficiency Program Manager to ensure that materials designed to support the needs of

gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender service recipients are accessible and available in the recipient(s) native language or alternative format.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Adequate pool of interpreters for multiple languages including rare languages.

### **Indicators of Progress:**

- Children's Administration service recipients report the ability to access publications or interpretation services in their primary language.

### **Target:**

- Ongoing

## **Conclusion**

This Cultural Competence Plan is meant to be a working document, ambitious and evolutionary in nature and flexible by design.

Children's Administration will work with the Department of Social and Health Services to review the goals, objectives, and action steps in this document and continually strive to ensure that all children and families have access to equitable services and supports, and the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes.

For more information about this plan or cultural competency efforts within the Children's Administration, please contact:

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